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CONTACT: Stacie Leatherman
(216) 707-2265
sleatherman@clevelandart.org

Cleveland Museum of Art's African and Oceanic Art Galleries to Close Temporarily

Exhibition of Elizabeth Catlett's Prints and Sculptures Scheduled, Followed by Galleries' Reinstallation

CLEVELAND (July 15, 2002) — The African art and Oceanic art galleries (241 and 242) at the Cleveland Museum of Art will close temporarily on July 22, 2002. The galleries will reopen in summer 2003.

After the galleries close, they will be prepared for an exhibition of prints and sculptures by the African-American artist Elizabeth Catlett, which will open on Sept. 15, 2002, remaining on view through Jan. 5, 2003. The African collection will be reinstalled in the galleries after the Catlett show has been dismantled.

In the new African gallery, 90 to 100 works of art will be arranged into four or five groups that reflect the major African geographic areas. The Museum's new African curator, Constantine Petridis, will experiment with interpretation techniques, such as field photographs and film footage, that will provide information about how objects were made and used in their original context. His aim is to make the collection more accessible and understandable to the Museum's visitors. He also wishes to improve the visibility of the collection by installing many objects — among them dramatic masks and three-dimensional figures — in freestanding cases so they may be viewed from all sides.

Performances and other events are being planned to celebrate the gallery's reopening.

The Cleveland Museum of Art is one of America's leading comprehensive museums. Its permanent collection is world renowned for its quality and breadth, spanning 5,000 years. The museum is a pivotal international forum for exhibitions, scholarship and art acquisitions. For more information on the museum, its holdings, programs, services and events, call 1-888-CMA-0033 or visit www.ClevelandArt.org.

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